



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**November 11, 2009**

### **ANNIKA FOUNDATION PARTNERS WITH SPARK TO PROMOTE HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIFESTYLES FOR CHILDREN**

Women's professional golf icon Annika Sorenstam is pleased to announce that the ANNIKA Foundation will partner with School Specialty's SPARK Programs to help educate America's youth about the benefits of physical fitness and proper nutrition. The non-profit foundation, whose mission includes teaching children the importance of living a healthy, active lifestyle, selected SPARK as a fitness and nutrition curriculum partner because of its proven, research-based success at positively affecting fitness and influencing healthy behaviors among pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade children with its award-winning wellness programs.

"As with golf, the best way to achieve a healthy lifestyle is to develop good habits and routines at a young age," said Sorenstam, who emphasized the unpaid, non-profit status of the SPARK partnership. "My passion for health and fitness started when I was a kid, so through my Foundation I want to promote those healthy lifestyle choices to today's youth. I am delighted that my Foundation has partnered with SPARK, which will provide an immediate opportunity to impact kids in our nation's schools. We believe that by reaching directly into the schools we can instill good health and nutrition habits in our youth, and that those habits will lead to a lifetime of benefits. It is really all about moderation."

SPARK offers programs in four major content areas: Physical Education, After School, Early Childhood, and Coordinated School Health. More than 45 research publications have validated SPARK's effectiveness, and it is the only National Institutes of Health-researched program that has been determined to positively affect youth activity levels, fitness, sport skills, enjoyment and academic achievement. In addition, SPARK has been honored as an Exemplary Program of the U.S. Department of Education, and cited in a Surgeon General's Report as a "school-based solution to our nation's healthcare crisis."

The partnership will focus on seeking opportunities to implement the SPARK programs in as many schools and after-school settings as possible and to teach all kids the importance of leading a healthy, active lifestyle. SPARK programs are already the curriculum of choice in several states, and many other states are currently focused on how to get their youth population active.

SPARK Executive Director Paul Rosengard says the combination of Annika's international stature and School Specialty's educational expertise and reach into schools forms a powerful health and wellness team. "We are delighted to partner with the ANNIKA Foundation to help advance this important effort," said Rosengard. "With our nation's focus on healthcare and illness prevention, the time is right for an alliance such as this. Annika's personal passion for helping children lead healthier and more active lives perfectly matches our mission as an organization. Together, we can inspire greater numbers of children to develop healthy behaviors, and by doing so help them achieve longer and more successful lives."

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### **About The ANNIKA Foundation**

The ANNIKA Foundation teaches children the importance of living a healthy, active lifestyle through fitness and nutrition, and offers aspiring junior golfers opportunities to pursue their dreams. A primary focus for the ANNIKA Foundation is to identify the greatest needs and opportunities to make an impact through the development of sports and physical fitness programs for kids. A key focus is to provide resources that increase participation and access where it is not currently available or affordable, and promote awareness for the importance of leading a healthy, active lifestyle.

### **About Annika**

Annika is the greatest female golfer of our generation and often regarded as the best player in LPGA history. Her prestigious list of accomplishments includes her 2003 induction into the World Golf and LPGA Halls of Fame, ten Major Championships, 89 worldwide professional victories, eight LPGA Player of the Year Awards, and participation on eight Solheim Cup teams. In June 2008, Annika was named a USGA Ambassador. Annika has worked hard on her off-the-course businesses, which include the ANNIKA Academy, the ANNIKA Foundation, the ANNIKA Collection with Cutter & Buck, ANNIKA Financial Group, numerous golf course design projects around the world, a signature fragrance and a namesake Syrah in partnership with Wente Vineyards.

### **About The SPARK Programs**

School Specialty SPARK is a series of research-based programs developed by San Diego State University that promote lifelong wellness. The SPARK Programs' methodologies have been researched and their effectiveness validated by a number of leading research organizations, including the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Surgeon General. Four program modules focus on Early Childhood, K-12 Physical Education, After School, and Coordinated School Health instruction. Each SPARK program provides curriculum, teacher training, follow-up support and consultation, and content-matched equipment sets through School Specialty's Sportime business line. For more information on SPARK, visit [www.sparkpe.org](http://www.sparkpe.org); or email: [spark@schoolspecialty.com](mailto:spark@schoolspecialty.com); or call 1-800-sparkpe.

### **About School Specialty**

School Specialty (NASDAQ: SCHS) is a leading education company that provides innovative and proprietary products, programs and services to help educators engage and inspire students of all ages and abilities to learn. The company designs, develops, and provides PreK-12 educators with the latest and very best curriculum, supplemental learning resources, and school supplies. Working in collaboration with educators, School Specialty reaches beyond the scope of textbooks to help educators, guidance counselors and school administrators ensure that every student reaches his or her full potential. For more information about School Specialty, visit [www.schoolspecialty.com](http://www.schoolspecialty.com).

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